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## ANALOGY IN THE LANGUAGES OF PRIMITIVE PEOPLES.

By ALEXANDER F. CHAMBERLAIN.

One of the ways in which names are given to new and unfamiliar objects and things is from analogy with the old and familiar. An inspection of the vocabulary of our own English language shows how many times this has happened with us,—in various Aryan tongues “cat,” “tiger,” “lion,” “cow,” “dog,” etc., have often given rise, through analogy, to other appellations of animals. And with primitive peoples this process is naturally more in evidence. This procedure is interesting psychologically both in relation to the laws of association and by reason of the fact that it occurs also so frequently in the language of children, to whom the naming of the unknown by analogy with the known seems to be as natural as it is to the savage and the barbarian. The examples here given are drawn from the language of the American Indians, whose value for the psychologist is just beginning to be appreciated.

*Apple.* This fruit seems to have taken the fancy of the Indians, and there are consequently many very interesting names for it, *e. g.*:

1. *Rose-hip.* The Kootenay name for apple is *gottwa*, which properly designates the “hip” of the wild prairie rose (*Rosa pisocarpa*); the same word is now used also to designate apricot, peach, pear, tomato, etc. The English term “rose-apple” for rose-hip is an interesting instance of like analogy.

2. *Cranberry.* The Micmac *wenjoosoon* signifies, literally, “French (*wenjoo*) cranberry (*soon*).” The analogy between the cranberry and the apple is not at all confined to the American Indian. While on Cape Cod, a few years ago, the writer heard a lady, who had never seen cranberries growing before, exclaim, “Do you know what these cunning little apples are?”

*Beet.* In several Indian languages, the beet, with which the natives became acquainted after having known the turnip, was named after the latter. Thus in Ojibwa, *miskotchis*, “beet,” signifies, literally, “red turnip.”

*Bottle.* The word for bottle in the language of the Massachusetts (Natick) Indians, *quonoasq*, designates properly a “gourd.” But in translating Matt. 9:17, Eliot used, for “in new bottles,” *wuskishquadt*, derived from the radical *wiskq*, “pot, dish, or vessel.”

*Buckwheat.* The Micmac name for buckwheat, *soooman-cheejul*, signifies, literally, "little beechnuts," from the resemblance in shape.

*Candy.* In Micmac candy is called *upkoo*, which properly signifies "chewing gum," and, before that, "pitch" (of a conifer). Here the "chewing" has determined the name. The Kootenay Indians, of British Columbia, from another point of view, call candy *gaktletl k'koktci*, "variegated (striped) sugar."

*Chocolate.* This drink, itself of American Indian (ancient Mexican) origin, was, however, unknown to the northern tribes until introduced by the whites. Says Bishop Bompas (Dioc. of Mackenzie River, Lond., 1888, p. 97): "Chocolate is a favorite beverage with the sick, where it can be obtained, and it is looked upon as a medicine. The Indians universally give it the name of *ox blood*, because it was mistaken by them for the blood of the musk ox, when they first saw it used by the whites." The analogy is, perhaps, between the chocolate in cakes, or before using, and the coagulated or frozen blood of the musk-ox. In Ojibwa chocolate is called *miskwabo*, "red liquid." In Nipissing, Cuoq (Lex. Alg., Montreal, 1886, p. 231) defines *miskwabo* as "mélange de sang, de graisse et de farine,"—from this, as in Ojibwa, the name passed over to chocolate. In these Algonkian tongues there is a folk-thought and probably also an etymological identity between *misko* or *miskwa*, "red," and *miskwi*, "blood."

*Cinnamon.* The Ojibwa name for cinnamon is *miskwanagak*, literally "red-cedar bark," the analogy being determined by the crude form in which this spice first came to the attention of these Indians.

*Cock of gun.* The Ojibwa name is *obwámens*, "little thigh," with which corresponds exactly in meaning the Micmac *aboog-wökjéech*.

*Cork.* In Ojibwa and Nipissing cork is called *wajashkwedo*, which term properly designates "fungus or mushroom, on trees or in the ground." The analogy with fungus or mushroom is a very natural one.

*Elephant.* The elephant, as a captive in the parks and "zoos" of American cities, and as a prominent figure in circuses, became known to members of many American Indian tribes,—also by means of pictures in books, etc. The names conferred upon this animal indicate the diversity of the analogies suggested to the Indian mind. Mooney (Myths of the Cherokee, p. 265) tells us that the Cherokee call the elephant *kāmāmā ütānā*, "great butterfly," by reason of "the supposed resemblance of its long trunk and flapping ears to the proboscis and wings of that insect." One of the Ojibwa names for the elephant is *kítshi kokūsh*, "great pig." The Micmac term for elephant, *bástogo-bāiit*, signifies "a sea cow."

*Fig.* The Ojibwa name for fig is *gítshi shōmin*, "big raisin" (*shōmin* originally signified grape, then raisin). In Micmac the fig is called *tāpatatweemunūl*, literally "potato fruit," or "potato balls," from the supposed resemblance.

*Goat.* The Micmac word for goat, *wenjooekuleboo*, signifies, literally, "French (*i. e.*, foreign) caribou."

*Haycock.* The Micmac word for haycock, *wees*, properly signifies "muskrat house," from the analogy of the shape.

*Hinge.* The literal meaning of the Micmac word for hinge, *memegech*, is "butterfly," from the resemblance in shape of the outspread hinge to the butterfly with wings open.

*Horse.* The horse was extinct in North America long before the coming of the Europeans of the Columbian discovery, by whom it was reintroduced into this continent, and from whom, directly or indirectly, all Indian tribes possessing or having possessed it, have received this animal. Many aboriginal peoples, who did not adopt a foreign name for the strange animal, or create a new name by observing and describing, in the appellation given it, some of its peculiarities as they perceived them, named it from analogy with other creatures of their environment, which they thought it in some way or other resembled. Often the horse was named from analogy with the dog. Thus the Dakota *sunka wakan* means "mysterious (sacred) dog;" the Blackfoot *ponokamita* and the Kootenay *killkatlahatlsin* both signify "elk dog;" the Cree *mistatim* means "big dog." Another Indian tribe, the Shawnee, called the horse *mishewe*, "elk." The use of the dog by Indians as a beast of transportation probably led to the naming of the horse so often after it. The Dakota name indicates that the horse was looked upon sometimes as an animal of mystery, which fact also may have had to do with his having been named also after the elk, an animal that had several mysterious attributes among some Indian tribes, and was not infrequently a "medicine" animal, as was likewise the dog.

*Lion.* In many parts of North America the large, foreign Felidæ were named after the native animals they were thought to resemble. Thus the Ojibwa word for lion *mishibishi*, signifies, literally, "large wildcat or lynx" (*Lynx canadensis*); and in the Nipissing dialect *mishipishi* is applied to the lion, tiger, panther, leopard, etc.

*Nutmeg.* The Ojibwa word for nutmeg, *gitshi gawissakang*, signifies "big pepper." Possibly both shape and taste have shared in this designation.

*Orange.* This exotic fruit was often named by the Indians from analogy with already existing fruits. The Kootenay, living beyond the Rocky Mountains, and the Micmacs, dwelling on the shores of the Atlantic, speaking absolutely unrelated

languages, both named it after the hip of the wild rose. Kootenay *gowitlka goltwa*, "orange," and Micmac *chikchowwegunech*, signify, the one, "large rose-hip," the other, "rose-hip."

*Peacock.* The Ojibwa word for peacock, *sasega misisse*, signifies, literally, "splendid (ornamented) turkey;" and another Ojibwa name is *oshawa misisse*, "green turkey."

*Peach.* One Ojibwa name for the peach is *mishipagasan*, "big plum," in analogy with the plums, cultivated and wild. A Kootenay term for peach is *aqkeitlmak*, which properly designated the fruit of the wild choke-cherry (*Prunus demissa*), the stone or pit of the fruit giving rise to the name.

*Pear.* The Micmac word for pear, *majeokteliguncheech*, means "little arrowhead," the name being given from the analogy in shape between the fruit and the blunt-headed arrows used for certain purposes by these Indians.

*Pig.* The Narragansett Indians called the European hog *ockqutchau*, i. e., "groundhog" (*Arctomys monax*). Concerning this word Roger William says, "a wild beast of a reddish hair, about the bigness of a pig, and rooting like a pig, from whence they give the name to all our swine." Trumbull derives the name (Natick Dict., p. 101) from *âgushan*, "he burrows," and makes the word cognate with modern Algonkian terms for "pig," Abnaki *agaskw*, Lenapé *goschgosch*, Micmac *koolkwes*, Ojibwa *kokush*, Cree *kokus*, etc. It has been said, however, that the *kokus* words are onomatopœic and refer to the habit of feeding of this animal.

*Putty.* The Ojibwa word for putty, *wassetchiganipigiw*, signifies, literally, "window pitch," while the Cree *wabamonabisko-passakwahigan* means "window glue."

*Turkey.* Although the wild turkey is native to Central America and Mexico, and before the advent of the Europeans was common from Florida to the Great Lakes, over the eastern half of the country, it, like the tame bird, was foreign to certain tribes of the Northwest, etc. Thus the Kootenay name for the turkey is *gowitlka t'ankuts*, literally "big grouse," the term being created from analogy with the ruffed grouse (*t'ankuts*). In like manner, the Blackfoot word for turkey, *omuxiketukki*, signifies, literally, "big prairie chicken."

*Turnip.* The Micmac word for turnip, *wenjoesugebun*, signifies, literally, French (foreign) ground-nut." The "ground-nut (*sugebun*)" was the *Apios tuberosa*, etc.

*Vinegar.* The Ojibwa word for vinegar, *shiwabo*, signifies, literally, "sour liquid," which is also the meaning of several other Indian names. The Kootenay term for vinegar, *kowis-lahane*, means "it is sour."

*Whiskey.* The many ways in which intoxicating liquors of

European origin were thrust upon the Indians of North America, and the amount of these they were induced to consume, have evidently made a great impression on their minds, if one may judge from the many names applied to it by them, ranging from "fire-water" to "new milk." The Kootenay Indians, *e. g.*, have these names for whiskey: *Nipika wuo*, "spirit water;" *nollugane wuo*, "the water of the stranger;" *suyapi wuo*, "white man's water;" *wuo*, "water" (*i. e.*, "the water"). The Ojibwa *ishkote wabo*, "fire liquor," and its relatives in other Algonkian dialects, indicate the source of the colloquial "fire water." The Micmac *booktawich* is derived from *bookta*, "fire."

The examples cited above of analogical naming will serve to indicate the wealth of psychological material in the field of research. There are abundant data for an extended monograph dealing with the primitive tongues of America alone, to say nothing of those of other regions of the globe. It is curious to find an elephant and a hinge both termed a "butterfly." And "oxblood" for chocolate, "potato balls" for figs, "arrow-head" for pear, etc., reveal interesting turns of the aboriginal mind. For comparison with the corresponding phenomena of the language of children a dictionary of analogy-names in the speech of primitive people would be of great value. On this the present writer has made a beginning.